

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3542

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ELAB PINS ILO IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI OFFICIALS EXPRESS CONCERN OVER ILO FUTURE

1. NEA LABOR ADVISOR HOLLY AND LABOR ATTACHE DISCUSSED ILO QUESTIN WITH ISTRADRUT, EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION, MINISTRYOF LABOR, AND FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. THEIR COMMENTS ALMOST UNIFORMLY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER LONG RANGE PROSPECTS FOR THE ILO, THE DEDICATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONS TO MAINTAIN A COMMON FRONTAGAINST THE ONSLAUGHT BY ANTI-DEMOCRATIC FORCES, THE ABILITY OF THE U.S. TO BRING ABOUT REFORMS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION, AND THE MORE IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE FORTHCOMING GENEVA AND WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCES.

2. ALL OFFICIALS WERE APPRECIATIVE OF THE TOUGH U.S. POSITION IN ILO AND THE FOUR DEMANDS EXPRESSED IN THE LETTER OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW (PRESERVATION OF TRIPARTITIE CHARACTER ELIMINATION OF POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES, MORE BALANCED CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND PRESERVATION OF DUE PROCESS). HOWEVER, IN LIGHT
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OF REPORTS THE EUROPEANS RESENT AMERICAN INITIATIVE AND

PRESSURES, THEY HAVE LITTLE HOPE THAT THE THREAT OF U.S. WITHDRAWAL WILL HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT.

3. WHILE BOTH FOREIGN MINISTRY AND HISTADRUT OFFICIALS CONCURRED THAT PRO-WESTERN CANDIDATES ARE LIKELY TO BE ELECTED AS HEAD OF GOVERNING BODY, CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN, AND HEAD OF WORKERS' GROUP, THEY REMAINED CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE SURPRISES. ALSO, THEY DO NOT HAVE MUCH CONFIDENCE IN THEIR LONG-TIME ALLIES IN WESTERN EUROPE TO BACK THEM UP IN FACE OF THIRD WORLD CHALLENGES.

4. MORATT OF MFA INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SECTION COMPLAINED ABOUT ONE-SIDED AND EXAGGERATED CHARGES REPETITIOUSLY VOICED AGAINST ISRAEL, THE REFUSAL OF THIRD WORLD DELEGATES TO LISTEN TO COUNTER CLAIMS EVEN IF WELL DOCUMENTED; THE ARBITRARY RULES WHICH A NOW APPARENTLY PERMANENT HOSTILE MAJORITY CAN IMPOSE ON THE ILO AND OTHER UN AGENCIES; AND THE DECLINING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ICFTU IN MARSHALLING A MAJORITY AMONG ITS OWN AFFILIATES EVEN ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE. IN HIS AND HIS COLLEAGUES' EYES THIS DISUNITY BODES ILL FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ILO. AT THE SAME TIME THEY MADE CLEAR THAT ISRAEL DOES NOT WANT TO ABANDON THE ILO, BUT HOPED TO CONTINUE WORKING THROUGH IT AS A MEANS OF MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH THE THIRD WORLD, AS WELL AS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR AND SOCIALIST MOVEMENTS.

5. BEN ISRAEL OF HISTADRUT AND MINISTRY OF LABOR DIRECTOR GENERAL GUREL COMPLAINED THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN ADVANCE INFORMATION AS TO WHAT THE HOSTILE GROUPS WERE PLANNING AND TO PREPARE AGAINST THEIR MANEUVERS. THEY THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS A PROBLEM NOT JUST FACING THEM, BUT ALSO AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT CLOSER ADVANCE CONSULTATION MIGHT BE POSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY IN THE COMING WEEKS.

6. THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATIONS THE ISRAELIS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT DESPITE THE IDENTITY OF U.S. AND ISRAELI OBJECTIVES IN THE ILO, THERE WAS A LACK OF FULL CONSULTATION, PARTLY DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF ANY CLEAR CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTION HOW THE U.S. WANTED TO PROCEED IN THE FUTURE. THEY SEE TIME RUNNING OUT AFTER THE GENEVA AND EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCES, WITHOUT SUFFICIENT ACCOMMODATION OF THE U.S. DEMANDS IN PROSPECT. SHOULD THE U.S. LEAVE THE ILO, INTERNATIONAL NON-COMMUNIST LABOR UNITY WOULD BE FURTHER WEAKENED, WITH NO NEW FORUM IN SIGHT TAKING THE PLACE OF THE ILO, AND WITH ISRAEL FINDING ITSELF FURTHER ISOLATED. DUNNIGAN

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